

Are snakebites dangerous?

- Dry bites: These occur when a snake doesn't release any venom with its bite. As you'd expect, these are mostly seen with non-venomous snakes.
- Venomous bites: These are much more dangerous. They occur when a snake transmits venom during a bite.

*Poisonous snakes voluntarily emit venom when they bite. They can control the amount of venom they discharge, and **50 to 70% of venomous snake bites result in envenoming or poisoning.**



How common are snakebites?

According to the CDC, about 8,000 snakebites happen in the U.S. each year. Even a bite from a harmless snake can cause infection or allergic reaction in some people. For your safety, treat all snakebites as if they were venomous. Go to a hospital emergency room as quickly as possible.

Even so, it is best to treat all snakebites as a medical emergency unless one is certain the bite came from a non-venomous snake. Any delay in treatment following the bite of a venomous snake could result in death or serious injury.



Do NOT do any of the following:

Do not pick up the snake or try to trap it. NEVER handle a venomous snake, not even a dead one or its decapitated head.

Do not wait for symptoms to appear if bitten, get medical help right away.

Do not apply a tourniquet.

Do not slash the wound with a knife or cut it in any way.

Do not try to suck out the venom.

Do not apply ice or immerse the wound in water.

Do not drink alcohol as a painkiller.

Do not take pain relievers (such as aspirin, ibuprofen, naproxen).